



NEWS RELEASE

US DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR ■ BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
LAS CRUCES DISTRICT OFFICE ■ 1800 MARQUESS ■ LAS CRUCES NM 88005

Hans Stuart ■ Public Affairs Chief ■ 505.438.7510

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For Additional Information
Steve Bumgarner 505.525.4305
Na'ama Tubman 505.525.4333

BLM FIRE RESTRICTIONS SET FOR SIX COUNTIES: OTERO, SIERRA, DONA ANA, LUNA, HIDALGO, GRANT

The fourth of July is just around the corner, and this year's warm temperatures combined with fuels in southern New Mexico have increased the fire danger. As a result, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is enforcing fire restrictions, effective July 2, to help ensure safety, prevent wildfires and facilitate fire-suppression. This is almost a month later in the year than last year's restrictions.

These fire restrictions cover 5.4 million acres of public lands in the Las Cruces District Office. This includes Otero, Sierra, Dona Ana, Luna, Hidalgo and Grant counties. The BLM is implementing the restrictions now because the hot, dry weather has finally dried out the fuels produced by earlier rains to the point where they could easily ignite and carry a fire.

The Fire Prevention Order was signed today by District Manager Ed Roberson. Beginning Saturday, the following restrictions will be in place:

- **Building or using a fire**, campfire, charcoal boiler or wood stove without a permit is prohibited, except in developed camping and picnicking areas. (Use of petroleum-fueled stoves, lanterns or heating devices is still allowed.)
- **Smoking** is prohibited, except within an enclosed vehicle or building, in a developed recreation site, or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable material.
- **Using a chainsaw** is prohibited without a permit.
- **Igniting any fireworks** is prohibited.

"We want everyone to have a safe Fourth of July weekend," said District Manager Ed Roberson. "These restrictions will help prevent wildfires over the holiday, and throughout the duration of the current high fire-danger conditions."

Violators may be fined up to \$1,000, and/or imprisoned not more than 12 months.

BLM is operating in conjunction with other agencies around the state, including State Forestry and the Lincoln National Forest. For more information contact the BLM at 505-525-4300, or check out these websites:

http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/fire/swainfo/firerestrictions/swa_restrictions_nm.htm -- NM

http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/fire/swainfo/firerestrictions/swa_restrictions_closures.htm -- NM & AZ

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www.nm.blm.gov